

# ORLEANS INDEPENDENT STANDARD.

A. A. EARLE, PUBLISHER.

No More Compromise with Slavery.

TERMS, \$1.25 IN ADVANCE.

VOLUME 7--NUMBER 4.

FRASBURGH, VERMONT, FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 1862.

WHOLE NUMBER 246.

From the Providence Journal.

## SUNSET.

FROM VICTOR HUGO.

I love the evening, golden and serene,  
Whether it glid old manors, dimly seen,  
Among their green, embowering shrouds,  
Or make the distant for a bank of fires,  
Or shoot through azure skies its thousand spires,  
Mid archipelagos of clouds.

Oh! view the sky. A hundred clouds drift,  
Housed by the wind, grotesquely group and shift,  
Their namesless form upon its plain;  
Beneath their edge, the pallid lightning flare,  
As if, in haste, some giant of the air  
Unheeded and sheathed his sword again.

Alas! their shadows still the sunlight streams,  
And makes the straw-thatched cottage with its  
beams,  
Burn like a regal palace bright;  
With misty dunes the vague horizon's view,  
And, falling upon lazy meadows dim,  
Lies shining in broad pools of light.

Sometimes I seem to see, suspended black  
And huge, a crocodile with ridgy back,  
And triple rows of sharpened teeth.  
Along his leaden breast the sunbeams glide;  
A thousand crimson cloudlets flake his side,  
Or gleam like burnished scales beneath.

Amid a palace forms; then shakes the air,  
And, quick as thought, the cloudy structure fair  
Tumbles in shattered ruin down;  
Far over the sky, its vernal turrets, spread  
With downward-pointing spires, hang overhead  
Like mountain pinnacles d'orthrune.

These turrets, iron, copper, golden clouds—  
Where thunder, lightning, storm, or whirlwind  
shrouds  
Itself asleep with muttered roar—  
The God who hangs them in the skies profound,  
As hangs the warrior from his ceiling round  
His ringing arms when war is o'er.

All vanishes; and, like a great globe of brass  
That's cast into the furnace's molten mass,  
Harried adown the western slope,  
The sun, beneath the cloven waves submerged,  
Flings up a fiery spume of clouds, dispersed  
In flakes o'er all the welkin rope.

Oh! view the sky; and while the daylight falls,  
Always and every where, beneath its veils,  
A love invisible.

Its solemn beauty masks a mystery—  
Summer, when gemmed with night's embroidery—  
When black and pallid, winter odd.

## DOWN HILL.

Not long since I had occasion to visit  
one of our courts, and while conversing  
with a legal friend, I heard the name of  
John Anderson called.

"There is a hard case," remarked my  
friend.

I looked upon the man in the prison-  
er's dock. He was standing up, and  
pleading guilty to the crime of theft. He  
was a tall man, bent and infirm, though  
not old. His garb was torn, sparse and  
bloodstained; his face was all bloated and  
flesh-colored; his hair matted with dirt, and  
his bowed form quivered with delirium.

Certainly I never saw a more pitiable  
object. Surely that man was not born  
a villain. I moved my place to obtain a  
fairer view of his face. He gazed upon  
me a single instant, and then covering  
his face with his hands, he sank power-  
less into his seat.

"Good God!" I involuntarily ejaculat-  
ed, starting forward. "Will—"

I had half spoken his name, when he  
quickly raised his head, and cast me a  
look of such imploring agony, that my  
tongue was tied at once. Then he cov-  
ered his face again.

I asked my legal companion if the  
prisoner had counsel. I then told him  
to do all in his power for the poor fel-  
low's benefit, and I would pay him. He  
promised and I left. I could not remain  
and see the man tried.

John Anderson! Alas! he was as-  
shamed to be known as his mother's son.

That was not his real name, but you  
shall know him by no other. I will call  
him by the name that stands upon the  
records of the court.

"John Anderson was my schoolmate,  
and it was not many years ago—not over  
twenty—that we left our academy to-  
gether; he returned to the home of  
wealthy parents—I, to sit down for a few  
years in the dingy sanctum of a news-  
paper office, and then wander off across  
the ocean. I was gone some four years,  
and when I returned I found John a  
married man. His father was dead, and  
had left his only son a princely fortune.

"And C—," he said to me as he met  
me at a railroad station, "You shall see  
what a bird I have caged. My Ellen is  
a lark, a robin, a very princess of all  
birds that ever looked beautiful or sang  
sweetly."

He was enthusiastic, but not mistaken;  
for I found his wife all that he had said,  
simply omitting the poetry. She was  
one of the most beautiful women I ever  
saw. And so good, too, so loving, so  
kind. Aye, she so loved John, that she  
really loved all his friends. What a  
happy fellow to find such a wife, and  
what a lucky woman to find such a hus-  
band. John Anderson was as handsome

as she—tall, straight, manly, high brow-  
ed, with rich chestnut curls, and a face  
as faultlessly noble and beautiful as art  
ever copied. And he was good, too, and  
kind, generous and true.

I spent a week with them, and I was  
happy all the while. John's mother  
lived with them, a fine old lady as ever  
breathed, and making herself constant  
joy by doting on her "darling boy" as she  
always called him.

I did not see John again for four years.  
In the evening I reached his house. He  
was not in, but his wife and mother were  
there to receive me, and two curly head-  
ed boys were at play about Ellen's chair.

I knew at once they were my friend's  
children. Everything seemed pleasant  
until the little ones were abed and asleep,  
and then I could see that Ellen was  
troubled. She tried to hide it, but a face  
so used to the sunshine of smiles could  
not conceal a cloud.

At length John came. His face was  
flushed and his eyes looked inflamed.  
He grasped my hand with a happy laugh,  
called me "old fellow," "old dog," said I  
must come and live with him, and many  
other extravagant things. His wife tried  
to hide her tears, while his mother shook  
her head and said:

"He'll sow these wild oats soon. My  
darling could never be a bad man."

"God grant it," I thought to myself;  
and I knew that the same was upon El-  
len's lips.

It was late when we retired, and we  
might not even then have seen so had not  
John fallen asleep in his chair.

On the following morning I walked  
out with my friend. I told him I was  
sorry to see him as I had seen him the  
night before.

"Oh," said he, with a laugh, "oh, that  
was nothing, only a little wine party.  
We had a glorious time. I wish you  
had been there."

At first I thought I would say no  
more; but as it was not my duty? I knew  
his nature better than he knew it him-  
self. His appetites and pleasures bound-  
ed his own vision. I knew how kind  
and generous he was—alas! too kind,  
too generous.

"John, could you have seen Ellen's  
face last evening, you would have trem-  
bled. Can you make her unhappy?"

He stopped me with—  
"Don't be a fool. Why should she be  
unhappy?"

"Because she fears you are going  
down hill," I replied.

"Did she say so?" he asked with a  
flushed face.

"No, I read it in her looks," I said.  
"Perhaps a reflection of your own  
thoughts," he suggested.

"Surely I thought so when you came  
home," I replied.

Never can I forget the look he gave  
me, so full of reproof, of surprise, of  
pain.

"C—, I forgive you, for I know you  
to be my friend; but never speak to  
me like that. I going down hill? You  
know better. That can never be. I  
know my own power and I know my  
wants. My mother knows me better  
than Ellen does."

Alas! had that mother been as wise as  
she was loving, she would have seen that  
the wild oats which her son was sowing  
would grow up and ripen only to furnis-  
hed for re-sowing. But she loved him  
—loved him almost too well, or I should  
say, too blindly.

But I could say no more. I only  
prayed that God would guard him, and  
then we conversed on other subjects. I  
could spend but a day with him, but we  
promised to correspond often.

Three years more passed, during which  
John Anderson wrote to me at least once  
a month, and often sometimes; but  
at the end of that time his letters ceased  
coming, and I received no more for two  
years, when I again found myself in his  
native town. It was early in the after-  
noon when I arrived and I took dinner  
at the hotel.

I had finished my meal, and was  
lounging in front of the hotel, when I saw  
a funeral procession wind into a distant  
churchyard. I asked the landlord whose  
funeral it was.

"Mrs. Anderson's," he said, and as he  
spoke I noticed a slight drooping of the  
head as if it cut him to the soul.

"What! John Anderson's wife?" I  
ventured.

"No," he said, "it is his mother," and  
as he told me this he turned away. But  
a gentleman near by, who had over-  
heard our conversation, at once took up  
the theme.

"Our host don't seem inclined to con-  
verse on that subject," he remarked, with  
a shrug, inquiring, "Did you know John  
Anderson?"

"He was my schoolmate in boyhood,  
and my bosom friend in youth," I told  
him.

He then led me aside and spoke as  
follows:

"Poor John! He was the pride of the  
town six years ago. This man opened  
his hotel at the time, and sought custom  
by giving wine suppers. John was pre-  
sent at many of them, the gayest of the  
gay, and the most generous of the party.  
In fact he paid for nearly all of them.  
Then he began to go down hill. At  
times true friends have prevailed upon  
him to stop, but his stops were of short  
duration. A short season of sunshine  
would glance upon his home, and then  
the night came more dark and dreary  
than before."

"He said he never would get drunk  
again, but still he would take a glass of  
wine with a friend! That glass of wine  
was but the gate that let in the flood.  
Six years ago he was worth sixty thou-  
sand dollars. Yesterday he borrowed the  
sum of fifty dollars to pay his mother's  
funeral expenses! That poor mother  
born up as long as she could. She  
saw her son—her 'darling boy,' as she  
always called him—brought home drunk  
many times. And she even bore blows  
from him! But now she is at rest. Her  
'darling boy' wore her life away, and  
brought her gray hairs in sorrow down  
to the grave. Oh! I hope this may re-  
form him!"

"But his wife?" I asked.

"Her heavenly love has held her up  
thus far, but she is only the shadow of  
the wife she was six years ago," he re-  
turned.

My informant was deeply affected, and  
so was I; consequently I asked no more.

During the remainder of the afternoon  
I debated with myself whether to call on  
John at all. But finally resolved to go  
though I walked only after tea. I found  
John and his wife alone. They had both  
been weeping, though I could see at a  
glance that Ellen's face was beaming  
with hope and love. But oh! she was  
changed—sadly, painfully so. They  
were glad to see me, and my hand was  
shaken warmly.

"Dear C—, don't say a word of the  
past," John urged, shaking my hand a  
second time. "I know you spoke the  
truth five years ago. I was going down  
hill. But I have gone as far as I can—  
here I stop at the foot. Everything is  
gone but my wife. I have sworn, and  
my oath shall be kept—Ellen and I are  
going to be happy now."

The poor fellow burst into tears. El-  
len followed suit, and I kept them com-  
pany. My God, what a sight! The  
noble, true man, so fallen—become a  
mere broken glass—the last fragment  
only reflecting the image it once bore;  
a suppliant at the foot of hope, begging  
a grain of warmth for himself and wife!

And how I had honored and loved that  
man! and how I loved him still! Oh!  
how I hoped—aye, more than hoped—I  
believed he would be saved. And as I  
gazed upon that wife—so trusting, so lov-  
ing, so true, and so hopeful, even in the  
midst of living death—I prayed more  
 fervently than I ever prayed before, that  
God would hold him up—lead back to  
the top of the hill. In the morning I  
saw the two children—grown to two in-  
telligent boys, and though they looked  
pale, yet they smiled when their father  
kissed. When I went away John took  
me by the hand, and the last words he  
said were:

"Trust me. Believe in me now. I  
will be a man henceforth while life lasts."

A little over two years had passed,  
when I read in a newspaper the death  
of Ellen Anderson. I started for the town  
where they lived as soon as possible,  
thinking I might help some one. A  
fearful presentiment possessed my mind.

"Where is John Anderson?" I asked.

"Don't know, I'm sure. He has been  
gone these last three months. His wife  
died in the mad-house last week!"

"And the children?"

"Oh, they both died before she did."

I staggered back and hurried from the  
spot. I hardly knew which way I went,  
but instinct led me to the churchyard.  
I found four graves which had been  
made in three years. The mother, wife  
and two children slept in them.

"And what has done this?" I asked  
myself. And a voice answered from the  
lowly sleeping places:

"The demon of the wine-table."

But this was not all the work. No.

The next day I saw it in the city  
court room. But this was not the last.

I saw my legal friend the day follow-  
ing the trial. He said John Anderson  
was in prison. I hastened to see him—  
the turnkey conducted me to his cell—  
the key turned in a large lock; the pon-  
drous door with a sharp crack swung up-  
on its hinges, and I saw a dead body sus-  
pended by the neck from a grated win-  
dow! I looked at the horrible face, but  
could see nothing of the face of John  
Anderson there, but the face I had seen  
in the court room was sufficient to connect  
the two; and I knew that this was all  
that remained of him that I loved so  
well.

And this was the last of the demon's  
work; the last act in the terrible drama.  
Ah! from the first spark of the red  
wine, it had been down, down down!  
until the foot of the hill had been reached.

AN HONEST LIFE.—The poor pit-  
tance of seventy years is not worth being  
a villain for. What matter is it if your  
neighbor lies in a splendid tomb? Sleep  
you with innocence. Look behind you  
through the track of time. A vast des-  
ert lies open in retrospect; wearied with  
years and sorrow, they sink from the  
walks of man; you must leave them  
where they fall; and you are to go a lit-  
tle further until you find eternal rest.

Whatever you may have to encounter  
between the cradle and the grave, every  
moment is big with events, which come  
not in succession, but bursting forcibly  
from a revolving and unknown cause, fly  
over this orb with a diversified influence.

THE SAVIOR AND HIS FRIENDS.—  
Our Lord, in the days of His flesh, en-  
countered various classes of enemies, but  
none of these ever included a woman.

On the contrary, the gentle sex always  
appear to have been his followers or  
friends. Not only were they, as has of-  
ten been said, the last at his cross and  
the first at his sepulchre, but throughout  
they ministered to his wants. A woman  
anointed him for his burial; a teacher  
woman interceded for his life with her  
husband, Pilate; women bewailed and  
lamented him as he went to Calvary;

to a woman he first appeared when he  
rose again. All this was most fitting,  
since of a woman he was born, and to  
woman his gospel was not only a means  
of salvation, but a source of domestic and  
social elevation for the present life.

DEVIL WORSHIPPERS.—There is a  
small sect of this kind of people in Asia,  
but our readers may be surprised to learn  
that in the city of Boston a congregation  
opened their services on a Sunday eve-  
ning by a direct prayer to the devil.

The prayer, as reported in the Banner of  
Light, began thus: "O Lucifer, thou son  
of the morning, who fell from thy high  
estate, and whom mortals are prone to  
call the embodiment of evil, we lift up  
our voices unto thee." It ended thus:

"O Satan, we will subdue thee with our  
love, and thou wilt yet kneel humbly  
with us at the throne of God." These  
are not the worst parts of the prayer,  
and the sermon was more blasphemous  
still. "By their fruits ye shall know  
them."

STRIKE ON.—How much like a rock  
in the ocean, against which the waves  
have beat for centuries, is the man of  
sterling worth and robust integrity! To  
the waves of unholy passion—to unac-  
counted popular applause, he says, "Strike  
on, I shall not be harmed." The seduc-  
tive influence of vice is all around him,  
but he is unmoved. Wealth is at his  
command if he will but swerve from the  
path of duty. No—you can as soon re-  
move the rock in the sea.

When the great and good Algernon Sid-  
ney was about to be executed, he calmly  
laid his head upon the block. He was  
asked by the executioner if he should  
rise again. "Not till the general resur-  
rection—strike on," was the remarkable  
reply of Sidney.

When unholy power would remove  
you on account of your virtue, say calm-  
ly, strike on; but do not yield to sin. Be-  
firm in your principles, even though death  
should stare you in the face. Strike on;  
be this your motto, whenever assailed by  
wealth or power, and glorious will be your  
triumph—if not in this world, in that to  
come.

Mr. George Seward, of the Atlan-  
tic Telegraph Company, has addressed a  
letter to Mr. Cyrus W. Field, of New  
York, urging the expediency of reviving  
the project of the Atlantic Cable.

## TERRIBLE ADVENTURE ON A VOLCANO.

Mr. Carl Steinhilber visited Mont Blanc  
in Iceland, just before its terrible erup-  
tion in 1845, and the following is his  
narrative of the fearful adventure which  
happened to him upon that sublime and  
desolate elevation:

Having secured a guide I set out on  
the morning following my arrival in  
Salsun (at the foot of the extinct volcano)  
praying for fair weather, good luck, and  
a safe return. The scenery, even from  
the first, was so different from any I had  
ever seen outside of Iceland as to be  
worthy of a better description than I am  
able to give. Suffice it to say that, as  
you push on, ascending summit after sum-  
mit on your way to the great and awful  
center of all, you find the danger, dread-  
fulness, and desolation increases to terrible  
sublimity, till at last when you do finally  
stand on the highest point in this unin-  
habited world of clouds, you instinctively  
pray God, with an icy shudder shivering  
through your miserable frame, to restore  
you to the life you seem to have left fur-  
ever behind you.

Oh, how shall I attempt to convey to  
any mind the awful scene of desolation  
that surrounded me, when at last I stood  
more than four thousand feet above the  
level of the sea, on the highest peak of  
barren Hecla! Six mortal hours—three  
on horseback, and three on foot—had I  
been climbing upwards from the world  
below; and now, among the very clouds,  
that rolled and swept around me, I stood  
in a world of lava mountains; ice and  
snow—the lava black as midnight, the  
snow of blinding whiteness—and not in  
all that region a tree, a bush, a shrub, a  
blade, or even a solitary living thing ex-  
cepting self and guide. Far as the eye  
could reach, when the moving clouds per-  
mitted me to see, was a succession of  
black, rugged hills, snow-crowned peaks,  
glittering glaciers, and ice-bound streams,  
into whose impenetrable solitude no human  
foot had ever penetrated—a world with-  
out plant or life—the very abomination  
of desolation—filled with yawning chasms,  
dreadful abysses, and midnight caves,  
which have never echoed any sound but  
the thunders of heaven, and the groan-  
ings and convulsions of earth. So wild  
and terrible was the scene that I felt a  
strange thrill, like madness, rush through  
my shivering frame and quiver about my  
dizzy brain, and I shuddered to break  
the stillness of death, and heard my voice  
come dismally back in a hundred echoes,  
till it seemed to be lost in the bowels of  
the unproductive earth.

Wrapping one of the blankets about  
me to protect me from the freezing cold,  
and cautiously using a pointed stick to  
try every foot of ground before me, I  
now began to move about, over blocks,  
and heaps, and hills of lava, and across  
narrow chasms, and pitfalls, and patches  
of snow and ice, my faithful guide keep-  
ing near, and often warning me to be  
careful of my steps. In this manner I  
at length ascended a ridge of considera-  
ble elevation, standing my way to the  
top, and now and then displacing frag-  
ments of lava that rolled crashing down  
behind me. As yet I had seen no signs  
of the mouth of the crater which, eighty  
years before, had vomited forth its terri-  
ble and desolating streams of melted black  
lava; but on reaching the summit of this  
ridge, I looked down into a sort of basin,  
open at the lower side, and having some  
three or four deep seams or chasms in its  
center, into which the melting snow and  
ice on its sides were running in small  
streams. A peculiar and not very agree-  
able odor came up with a thin, smoky  
vapor, and I fancied I could hear a dis-  
tant sound, something between a gurgle  
and a rumble.

"I suppose this is the original crater,"  
I said, turning to the guide.

The fellow was as pale as death, and  
every feature expressed surprise mingled  
with fear.

"What is the matter?" I quickly de-  
manded. "Have you never seen this  
spot before?"

"I have seen this place before, master,"  
he replied, "but never anything like this.  
When I was here last there was no hot  
lava here, but only a level plain of snow  
and ice."

"Indeed!" exclaimed I, feeling strange-  
ly interested. "What then do you infer  
from that there is about to be another erup-  
tion?"

"I fear so, master, what else can have  
caused this change? You see there is  
heat below, which has melted the thick  
glacier, and only a few streaks of ice  
now remain upon part of the sides, while  
the center is gone."

"And the ground here has a slight feel-  
ing of warmth, too," I rejoined as I  
bent down and laid my hand upon it.

"Let us leave, master," returned the  
fellow, hurriedly looking around with an  
expression of alarm. "I do not like to  
remain here; we may be destroyed at  
any moment. Let us hasten down and  
report what we have seen."

"Nay," said I, feeling strangely inter-  
ested and fascinated by the perilous nov-  
elty. "I do not think there is any im-  
mediate danger, for the snow and ice, it  
is plain to be seen, have melted slowly,  
and before I go away never to return, I  
should like to venture into this basin and  
look down into one of those chasms."

"Oh, no! master," replied the guide,  
with nervous anxiety, "it might cost you  
your life."

"At least I will risk it if you will  
agree to wait for me," said I, fully de-  
termined on the venture, even though I  
should go without his consent.

"I will wait," he answered, "but re-  
member, master, you go down against my  
advice."

The crater or hollow was about fifty  
feet in depth, with gently sloping sides;  
and using my pointed stick with the great-  
est care, I forthwith began the descent,  
often stopping to try the temper of the  
lava with my hand, and finding it gradu-  
ally grow warm as I descended, though  
not sufficiently so to excite my alarm.

In a short time I reached the bottom, and  
stood on the verge of one of the seams,  
or chasms, which opened far, far down  
into the heart of the mountain. It was  
about four feet in width, zigzag in shape,  
and emitting strongly the peculiar odor  
before mentioned. A small, trickling  
stream from a melting layer of incandes-  
cent lava was running into it; but I could only see  
that it was lost in the deep darkness be-  
low, from which came up a kind of his-  
sing, boiling, surging sound, with some-  
thing like a rumbling shock at intervals,  
and gentle pulls of heated air.

The place, the scene, and, without the  
sense of danger connected with it, held  
me there with a sort of magnetic fasci-  
nation, and I soon found myself strongly  
tempted to make a fatal plunge into the  
awful abyss. Knowing by experience  
that reason is not able to control the ac-  
tions in such cases, I forced myself back  
a few feet, but still remained near the  
opening, deaf to the entreaties of my  
frightened guide, who now began to im-  
plore me to return before it was too late.

As the dread volcano had not been in ac-  
tion for more than thirty years before his  
birth, I believed he could know no more  
of the danger than myself, and therefore  
preferred to act from the dictates of my  
own feelings rather than his fears; and  
as I was to pay him well for his services,  
felt but little disposed to be hurried from  
a place which had cost me so much time,  
money, and trouble to visit.

Giving no heed, therefore, to his ear-  
nest solicitations, I now resolved to sound,  
if possible, the depth of the chasm before  
me, and then proceed to inspect others;  
and for this purpose, I pried off from a  
larger one a small block of lava, and  
advancing to the very verge of the chasm,  
dropped it down and listened to the ho-  
low reverberations, as it went bounding  
from side to side, long after it was lost  
to the eye. The depth was so immense  
that I heard it for more than a minute,  
and then the sound seemed rather to die  
out from distance than to cease because  
the block had reached its destination. It  
was an awful depth, and fearfully im-  
pressed me with the terrible; and as I  
drew back with a shudder, a gust of hot  
sulphureous air rushed and roared upward,  
followed by a steam like vapor, and a  
heavy hollow sound, as if a cannon had  
been discharged far down in the bowels  
of the earth.

This new manifestation of the powers  
of nature fairly startled me into a desire  
for flight, and I had already turned for  
the purpose, when suddenly there came  
a sort of rumbling crash, and the ground  
shaking, heaving, and rolling under me  
began to crumble off into the dread abyss.

I was thrown down, and, on my hands  
and knees, praying to God for mercy, ever  
rebounding over it and upward, to save  
myself from a most horrible fate, when  
two blocks, rolling together, caught my  
feet and legs between them, and without  
actually crushing, held them as in a vice.

Then came another crash and crumble,  
the lava slid away from behind me, and  
I was left upon the very verge of the  
awful gulf, now widened to some fifteen  
or twenty feet, down into which I looked  
with horror-strained eyes, only to see  
darkness and death below, and breathe  
the almost suffocating vapors that rushed  
up from that seemingly bottomless pit.

Oh the horrors of that awful realiza-  
tion!—what pen or tongue can portray  
them?—there, a helpless, conscious pris-  
oner, suspended over the mouth of a  
black and heated abyss, to be hurled  
downward by the next great throes of  
trembling nature.

"Help! help! help! for the love of  
God, help!" I screamed in the very ago-  
ny of wild despair.

I looked up and around to catch a  
glimpse of my guide; but he was gone,  
and I had nothing to rely on but the mer-  
cy of heaven, and I prayed to God as I  
never prayed before, for a forgiveness of  
my sins that they might not follow me to  
judgment. It might be a second, it might  
be a minute, it might be an hour, that I  
should have thus to undergo a living  
death, but he the time long or short, I  
felt there was no escape from a doom that  
even now makes me shudder and grow  
pale when I think of it. Above me was  
a clear blue sky—beneath me a black  
and horrible abyss—around me sickening  
vapors that made my brain grow  
dizzy. Rumbling and hissing sounds  
warned me that another convulsion might  
occur at any moment, and another would  
be the last of me. Home and friends I  
should never see again, and my tomb  
would be the volcanic Hecla. I strove  
with the madness of desperation to dis-  
engage my imprisoned limbs, but I might  
as well have attempted to move a mount-  
ain. There I was fixed and fastened for  
the terrible death I was awaiting. Oh!  
God of mercy! what a fate!

Suddenly I heard a shout, and, look-  
ing around, I beheld with feelings that I  
cannot describe, my faithful guide hasten-  
ing down the rugged sides of the crater  
to my relief. He had fled in terror at  
the first alarming demonstration, but had  
nobly returned to save me if possible, by  
risking his life for mine. May God re-  
ward him as he deserves.

"I warned you, master," he said, as  
he came up panting, his eyes half start-  
ing from his head, and his whole counte-  
nance expressing mingled terror and  
pity.

"You did! you did!" cried I, "but  
oh forgive and save me!"

"You are already forgiven, master,  
and I'll save you if I can—save you or  
perish with you."

Instantly he set to work with his iron-  
pointed stick to break the lava around  
my limbs, but had scarcely made any  
progress when the earth trembled, and  
the blocks parted, one of them rolling  
down into the yawning chasm with a dull  
hollow sound. I spring forward—I seized  
a hand of the guide—we both strug-  
gled hard, and the next moment we had  
both fallen, locked in each other's arms,  
upon the solid earth above. I was free,  
but still upon the verge of the pit, and  
any moment we might both be hurled to  
destruction.

"Quick, master!" cried the guide, "up  
and run for your life!"